

# LAKE COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

14815 OLYMPIC DRIVE, CLEARLAKE, CALIFORNIA 95422  
707-994-2170 PHONE 707-994-4861 FAX

March 13, 2025

Assemblymember Heather Hadwick  
1021 O Street, Suite 5710  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: SUPPORT – AB 993 (Hadwick): Increasing Funding for Hazardous Materials and Waste Programs in Rural Counties**

Dear Assemblywoman, Hadwick:

On behalf of the Lake County Fire Protection District, we are pleased to support AB 993. The Lake County Fire Protection District provides Haz Mat, Fire, EMS, and Rescue All-Hazard response to 165 square miles, a population of approximately 22,000 and annual calls for service of 6,177. We coordinate with Lake County Environmental Health on a routine basis, and they are active members of our hazardous materials incident response team.

AB 993 improves emergency response and enhances environmental protection by expanding eligibility for California Environmental Protection Agency's (CalEPA) Rural Certified Unified Program Agency (CUPA) Reimbursement program to 12 additional counties and increases the funding to account for inflation.

A CUPA is a local agency certified by CalEPA to implement and enforce an umbrella of six state hazardous materials and waste regulatory management programs: hazardous materials business plans, underground storage tanks, aboveground storage tanks, accidental release prevention programs, hazardous waste management, and hazardous waste tiered permitting programs. CUPAs are generally funded by fees imposed on regulated businesses; however, smaller rural areas have fewer regulated entities to support program costs. To incentivize more rural counties to form their own CUPAs, the Legislature created the Rural CUPA Reimbursement program.

Currently, 13 counties with under 150,000 residents and whose CUPAs were established after January 1, 2000, are eligible for state reimbursement of up to 75 percent of program implementation costs, up to \$60,000, annually.<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately, 12 other counties meet the population threshold, but had CUPAs certified before January 1, 2000, and are ineligible for reimbursement.<sup>2</sup> If annually adjusted for inflation, the \$60,000 cap established in 2001 would be approximately \$108,000 today.

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<sup>1</sup> Calaveras, Colusa, Glenn, Inyo, Lassen, Mariposa, Modoc, Plumas, Sierra, Sutter, Tehama, Trinity, and Yuba Counties.

<sup>2</sup> Alpine, Amador, Del Norte, Humboldt, Lake, Mendocino, Mono, Napa, Nevada, San Benito, Siskiyou, and Tuolumne Counties.

This measure will increase local capacity to respond to wildfires and other hazardous material emergencies, ensure first responders are aware of the dangerous chemicals and substances stored in the buildings throughout the communities they protect, and help prevent underground and aboveground storage tank leaks that may contaminate land and drinking water supplies.

For these reasons, we are pleased to support AB 993.

Sincerely,



Willie Sapeta, Fire Chief, Lake County Fire Protection District  
Op Area Fire-Rescue Coordinator



# Lake County Fire Chiefs' Association

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Willie Sapeta, President,

Lake County Fire Chiefs Association